

Preface

This volume collects the proceedings of Passwords 2015, the ninth event in the PasswordsCon¹ series, held at the University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory during December 7–9, 2015.

This series of workshops was originally branded as “a hacker conference that’s all about passwords, PIN codes, and digital authentication.” It was started in 2010 by independent password expert Per Thorsheim and, from 2011 through 2014, received backing and sponsorship from Norwegian research network FRISC (Forum for Research and Innovation in Security and Communications) led by Stig Frode Mjølsnes of NTNU (Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim). For the first few years, all talks were selected by invitation of the organizers and there were no written proceedings. In 2014 we started accepting refereed papers and we have since been publishing the proceedings in Springer’s LNCS series.

We promote the interplay between the hacker community and the academic password research community, convinced as we are that the two camps have much to learn from each other. To strengthen the links we invited two distinguished keynotes, one from each camp: Chris Wysopal, one of the members of hacker think tank L0pht, spoke on “The History of L0phtCrack,” while Angela Sasse, Professor of Human-Centred Security at UCL, spoke on “Users Hate Passwords—So Are They on Their Way Out?” The rest of the presentations, following the same strategy, intermixed refereed papers and non-refereed invited talks, sometimes also indicated as “hacker tutorials.” All presentations² were recorded and the videos are available online on YouTube³.

The event was hosted by Frank Stajano and Graeme Jenkinson at the Computer Laboratory of the University of Cambridge, home of the Pico project, which offered sponsorship in kind. Graeme Jenkinson was the local arrangements chair and also ended up making everything else happen. The formal dinner was hosted at Trinity College, Cambridge, where Frank Stajano is a fellow. Financial sponsorship was gratefully received from Entrust Datacard, Elcomsoft, and Sagitta.

The main body of these printed proceedings contains the refereed papers, while the section “Non-refereed Presentations” included in the frontmatter lists the titles and, where available, abstracts of the non-refereed presentations, including the keynote talks, the hacker tutorials and the 5-minute impromptu “lightning talks” that were given during the rump session on the first evening.

Hacker tutorials were selected and invited by Per Thorsheim, the general chair. Concerning the refereed papers, we received 32 submissions of which nine passed peer review (28 % acceptance rate), six as full papers and three as short papers. Each paper, full or short, received at least three reviews. The paper by Elizabeth Stobert and Robert

¹ <https://passwordscon.org/>

² <http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/events/passwords2015/programme.html>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/user/thorsheim/> videos

Biddle, “Expert Password Management,” won the Best Paper Award and was the only one to be unanimously indicated as “best of my batch” by all of its reviewers.

With over 100 participants, Passwords 2015 at Cambridge has been the most successful event in the series to date. This was also the first year in which the event became financially self-sustaining. We hope that future editions will improve on these records and that the synergy between hackers and academics will continue to bring fruitful and unexpected results.

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